1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



*Peter-ihi–Venu.*

According to one version, the village of Peter-ihi was founded from Raga, as stated in the following tale:

There lived on Raga two brothers, Na-tò, the elder, and Viriümb, and the name of their landing-beach was La-tan-wolwol. And each one built a canoe. Na-tò made his from wood of the bread-fruit tree (*pego*), and Viriümb made his from the wood of the tree called *nev*. Having made the sails, they set out, each in his own canoe, for Ambrim. Na-tò, the elder, started first. Viriümb waited till his elder brother was well out to sea, and then, launching his own canoe, swiftly overtook and passed him, so that he landed first on the coast of Ambrim, where he triumphantly awaited the arrival of the belated Na-tò.

The two then remained on Ambrim, visiting their friends, and bargaining for pigs. But Na-tò (the elder) was unsuccessful and came back empty-handed, while Viriümb (the younger) had acquired a re-entrant-tusker (*bo-ware*).[1] On the return journey Na-tò again started first. Viriümb again waited till his elder brother was out of sight, then overtook him and landed first on their beach in Raga. But his mother came down to the shore and pushed his canoe back into the sea, saying, "Why do you always land first? Your brother is the elder; you should let him be the first to come ashore." So Viriümb remained floating close to the beach, till at last his elder brother came up. And Na-tò asked him, "Why have you not gone ashore?" Then Viriümb wept, and said, "Our mother pushed out my canoe and told me I must let you land first."

So Na-tò went ashore, but Viriümb remained afloat. And Na-tò called to him, "What's the matter? Why don't you come ashore?" "Oh, nothing," he replied. "I'm only waiting here for a bit." For he was angry with his mother for having pushed out his canoe.

And Na-tò went home. And while Viriümb, the younger brother, was still floating off the shore, a great wind, *rualo*, blew from the north-east, and he turned his sail and ran before the wind till he came to Vao, and landed at a beach that is now called La-ha-na-ruhute, after Ruhute, the name of his canoe. And he founded the village of Peter-ihi, and his descendants bred from the tusked boar he brought with him, that he had acquired on Ambrim. And that is why there are so many tusked boars on Vao and Malekula generally, and few on Raga, whither the Malekulans now go selling tuskers.

According to another account, the double-village of Peter-ihi–Venu is said to have been colonised from Oba. Oba and North Raga are both within the matrilineal dual organisation area.

On the other hand, Venu is said by some to have been founded from

[1] A boar of which the artificially elongated tusk has curled round and re-entered the jaw (see p. 243).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



the Malekulan village of Tontore. Godefroy agrees with this, spelling the name Tountor and stating that it is situated somewhere among the mountains.[1] The same informants said that Peter-ihi originated from the Malekulan village of Buaror. According to yet another account, however, it is said that it was only the weather magic practised at Peter-ihi that came from Buaror.[2] Godefroy supports the mainland origin of Peter-ihi when he says that its inhabitants "seem in fact to have come from the mainland of Malekula, of which they are proud to bear the name."[3]

*Singon–Norohure.*

The double-village of Singon–Norohure is also said, according to one account, to have been founded from Raga. Godefroy, however, makes the interesting statement that the inhabitants of Norohure "were always on Vao, but do not know the story of the *memel* fruit," and that, with regard to the inhabitants of Singon, "no one knows where they came from."[4]

The story of the *memel* fruit referred to is the story of the foundation of Pete-hul by Ta-ghar recounted below.[5] The fact that neither Norohure, nor, apparently, Singon, are acquainted with this tale of origin shows, like the place-names, a distinct difference in cultural level between this easternmost double-village and those in the centre and west. Since the inhabitants of Norohure are said always to have been on Vao, and the foundation of Pete-hul and the introduction of its story of origin occurred only nine generations ago, this evidence points to the conclusion that, of the two Sides of the Island, we should expect the eastern Side to show traces of social organisation older than that of the west. This supposition is strongly supported by the fact that both double-villages on the eastern Side are said to be connected with the culturally older matrilineal areas of Oba and (presumably North) Raga.

## Tale of the Quarrel between Lavame and Handillagh

Yet another tale, dealing with the now extinct communities of Lavame and Handillagh, shows the close connexion existing between the older stratum on Vao and the matrilineal island of Oba.

These two communities are said formerly to have lived close to one another on Vao, and the tale sets out to explain the reason why they quarrelled and finally broke up. The story relates that while some Lavame men were engaged on an expedition to Oba, the wife of one of them was unfaithful, and had connexion with a man from Handillagh.

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 48.
[2] See p. 634.
[3] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 53. He states further (p. 48) that, like Pete-hul, this village was founded by the direct action of Ta-ghar.
[4] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 48.
[5] See p. 82.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



But the couple were surprised by a Lavame man who had stayed at home. Now this man was a *Ghamba Lep*,[1] one of those who through membership of a well-known secret society can turn themselves into birds, and he resolved to make use of this power to warn the husband on his return from Oba. So, as the returning canoe rounded the sandy promontory of La-singo,[2] he transformed himself into two banded rails (*pilagh*), a male and a female, and he made the male rail chase the female along the shore till she yielded and they copulated.

Now the husband saw this from his canoe, and, recognising that it must be the work of a *Ghamba Lep*, determined to find out what had happened. So he went home, and beat his wife till she confessed her transgression, saying that she had lain with the Handillagh man. So the men of Lavame fought those of Handillagh till the decimated survivors of the latter took refuge in the village of Singon, and those who remained of Lavame left Vao and established themselves in a new village of the same name on the mainland. This village has now died out, the only survivors being one man and his two sons, who, having returned to Vao, are now living at Togh-vanu.

## Physical Types

The result of this dual origin of the population still shows itself in a variation in physical type remarkable in so small an island. Thus Speiser comments that "it is possible today to distinguish clearly on Vao two types, the Melanesian type from Malekula, dark-skinned, thick-set and frizzly-haired, and the type from Oba, lighter-skinned, more slender and often with almost curly hair." [3] Owing to intermarriage, however, this variation in type is no longer correlated with any existing topographical divisions, but occurs sporadically throughout the whole population, which now forms a single cultural unit closely knit together through ties of kinship.

## ORIGINS OF THE SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Turning once more to the evidence regarding the origin and nature of the existing social organisation, four sets of facts present themselves:

(*a*) The mythological data concerning the creation of the inhabitants of Pete-hul through the direct agency of Ta-ghar.
(*b*) Accounts of the subsequent formation of its offshoot village Togh-vanu.
(*c*) The genealogies.
(*d*) The kinship system.

I propose first to examine the mythological data and the genealogies.

[1] See p. 238. [2] Possibly Singon. [3] Speiser, 3, pp. 59-60.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



## Myth of the Creation of Pete-hul through the Direct Action of Ta-ghar

The following myth told of the foundation of Pete-hul is found throughout the Small Islands of Malekula.[1]

I have two main versions from Vao, one recorded by myself, and the other by Godefroy. I will begin with mine.

*Author's account.*

The scene of the creation was what is now the Upper Side of the dancing-ground of Pete-hul, where it abuts on the Quarter called *Lamberang* (A[1]), which means "At the Cave." At this spot there grew a huge tree of the kind called *gha-tambol*, with buttress-roots dividing the ground about its base into a number of separate compartments. Such trees are regarded with great veneration throughout Malekula, second only to the banyans as objects of religious awe. Many taboos exist regarding treading over their roots, a fact which does not, however, prevent the compartments they form being used for storage and other purposes.

Clinging to this particular *gha-tambol* tree was a creeper of the kind called in the Atchin dialect *memel*, but which Godefroy spells *nor-mael*. This creeper, which twines itself high up among the branches of the forest trees, produces a superb oval-shaped fruit, the size of a large plum, coloured a most lovely red. Each fruit swings separately on the end of its own hanging line of creeper. It is an object of passionate desire not only to adults, but also to children, who eat it with a kind of reverent relish not accorded to any other fruit.

According to my account of the creation, there were at first no people. Then Ta-ghar caused one of these *memel* fruit to fall so that it struck a buttress-root of the *gha-tambol* tree, reaching the ground in two halves, one on either side of the root. One half became a man, the other a woman. The name of the man was Ghiagh,[2] and that of the woman Le-huar. One day the man heard a noise, and, looking over the root, he saw the woman, and said, "Where did you come from?" She answered, "I've been here a long time. Where did you come from?" He said, "I've been here a long time too." They did not know they came from the *memel* fruit. They remained there, and after a time they married. And the woman bore four sons, the founders of the four Quarters of Pete-hul.

[1] For other versions see pp. 165, 171-2.

[2] I have no further information about Ghiagh other than a single detail clearly belonging to a longer story, to the effect that his hair was burnt by a jealous female sorcerer. His name is philologically equivalent to that of Ias in the oral historical records of Atchin mentioned on pp. 171, 715.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OOI2 Malekula OOI2



*Godefroy's account.*

Godefroy's account is more racy.[1] Having described the falling of the *memel* fruit on to the buttress-root of the *gha-tambol* tree, he says: "The fruit split in two. One half fell to the right, the other half fell to the left. And it happened thus, that one half was a man and the other half a woman. Both slept with a profound sleep. How long . . . did this sleep last? No one knows. But one day, when the woman turned over on her side, her elbow struck the buttress-root. This unexpected noise woke up the man, who, after thinking it over, raised himself from the ground by leaning on his arm, and looked over to the other side. 'Hallo,' he said, 'there is a woman!' The woman, in her turn, was awakened by the sound of this voice which she had never heard before. Wondering what it might be, she cast her eyes over the partition, and cried, 'Hallo, it is a man!' Her woman's tongue already itched to speak, and she could not prevent herself from asking, 'What are you doing there?'—'I was asleep.'—'And so was I; I have been asleep for so long, so long. . . .' The man, interrupting her, said, 'I am hungry. Go and find me something to eat. . . .' They both got up and looked for fruits with which to satisfy their hunger. That evening, they went back to their respective compartments, and again slept. Next morning they woke up cramped with the coolness of the night and with the dew, which had been heavy. So they made a fire[2] on which to cook chestnuts. Doubtless the rain troubled them. But it was not till several days had passed that they said to one another, 'Let us build a house.' Every evening after that they joined one another in their dwelling-place, and, finding themselves sheltered from the heat of the sun at noon and from the cold by night, they decided to remain together. It is in this way that the man married the woman."

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 45-6. Though claiming to be in the words of his informant, Val-vale, of the village of Togh-vanu, it includes, however, several European solecisms, which I omit.

[2] Speiser (3, p. 365), quoting verbal information from Père Jamond, former R.C. Missionary on Vao, gives further details about the origin of this fire in the following account: "Once a fruit fell from a tree on to the edge of a root. The fruit split into two and one part fell on either side of the root. These became man and woman. By the side of the tree grew a bamboo. The wind blew it so that it rubbed against a dead branch. That was the origin of fire. The man took the fire, fanned it and lit brushwood with it. The woman smelt the fire, looked over the edge of the root, saw the man and asked him what it was. He told her it was fire, and gave her some. Since then men and women have always had separate fires. Later, they married." The inclusion of the origin of fire in this account of the mating of the first couple is of special interest with regard to an article by the same author, in which he points out the symbolic meaning of fire as representing what he calls *Lebenskraft* (life-force) as opposed to *Zeugungskraft* (physical procreation), and sums up: "The strength-giving principle that contains above all the life-force is fire, which originally arose in the genital organs and is revealed in the act of copulation. The fire is communicated to the genital organs" (Speiser, 4, p. 250).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



liquid, save in two places which are indented in the same way as the Tolamp image. Codrington also mentions a vision experienced by a native after the death of the last heathen chief of Walurigi, in North-East Oba. This man's son had become a Christian, so could not succeed to the chieftainship. When the chief died, "a certain man attempted to take his place; he went into the late chief's sacred haunt . . . in which he used to have his intercourse with the . . . spirits, and he declared that he heard someone whistle to him there. He told the people also that afterwards in the night he felt something come upon his breast, which he took in his hands, and found to be a stone in shape like the distinguishing part of a valued kind of pig," [1] in other words, as appears from a footnote, the sexual organs of an intersex pig.

## The Pig as Symbol of Fertility

This raises the subject of pigs as fertility symbols. I shall have more to say about this in future volumes. A tale told on Vao, where intersex pigs are not bred, will suffice to illustrate this aspect of native thought with regard to ordinary sows.

*Story of a Tolamp man who begot a child on the wife of a friend from Pweter-ges, at the latter's request, because he was impotent.*

There was a man of Tolamp,[2] called Ter-ter, and another of Pweter-ges, near Lawor, whose name was Burial. And the two were friends. And Burial came to Ter-ter, and said, "You have plenty of pigs, and I have no children." Ter-ter said, "That is so." And Burial again said, "I have plenty of wives, but cannot get any children. I will buy yet another wife, a young one. Will you come and lie with her, and make a child for me?" So they appointed a day, and Burial said, "You come to Ghoramp (the beach on the mainland near Wala), and I will come too and bring my wife with me, and then you will be able to manage things."

So Ter-ter went to Ghoramp, and Burial brought his wife half-way, telling her to go on down to Ghoramp, where she would find a man, to whom she was to deliver herself. She went down, but could not see him, for he had concealed himself above the cave called *barang na ta-mat* (through which the dead must pass on their journey to the Land of the Dead).[3] She waited and waited, and at last turned to go away. But then he

[1] Codrington, J. R. 57.

[2] The story refers to a period subsequent to the submergence of Tolamp, when its inhabitants had founded the last of the villages bearing this name on the mainland opposite Vao.

[3] See pp. 217, 227. He chose this spot, which lies half-way between the two villages, presumably so that the woman should think he was a ghost, in order to avoid complications with the husband.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



threw a stone towards her (the usual way of a lover to make his presence known), and she turned back and saw him, and they went into the bush and lay together.

After this the woman bore a son. And Burial said, "Now I've got a son, I will buy a pig for him." So he bought a sow, which conceived, but instead of delivering at Pweter-ges, she ran away and littered at Tolamp (this must have been at the time when Tolamp was already on the mainland), where she gave birth to five male pigs. And Burial looked everywhere for the sow, but could not find her, till at last he lit upon her tracks (for it was the time of the rains), and followed them to Tolamp, where he found his sow and her five pigs and took them home. Next day he gave ten yams to his women [1] and told them to go to Tolamp and give them to Ter-ter as a return for "getting his wife with child and making his sow give birth to the five pigs." And having taken them they returned home.[2]

## CONCH-SHELL TRUMPETS

(a) *Connected with the sacrifice of tusked boars.*

Before leaving the subject of pigs, one object especially connected with them deserves more than passing mention. This is the conch-shell trumpet, made by boring a hole in a large Triton shell.[3] When blown through this hole, the trumpet emits a loud, deep sound which carries a considerable distance. Of the two methods of boring it, at the end or at one side, it is the latter that is in use in the whole of the New Hebrides and in the Banks and Torres Islands, except in the island of Fate, where it is bored at the end. It is therefore only with trumpets with the hole bored at the side, which is also the commonest form in Polynesia, that we are concerned here. The trumpet is held in the left hand, with the hole pressed against the mouth, and variations in tone are produced by inserting the fingers of the right hand into the opening at the end of the shell. As the fingers are inserted further into the hole the tone rises, so that by this means a variety of tones is obtained. The variations in tone, combined with the number of times they are repeated, form the basis on which a number of established signals have been evolved, chief among which, in the Small Islands, are the four signals blown to herald the exchange or sacrifice of the four main categories of tusked boars.[4]

There is thus an intimate connexion between conch-shell trumpets

[1] Presumably his other wives.

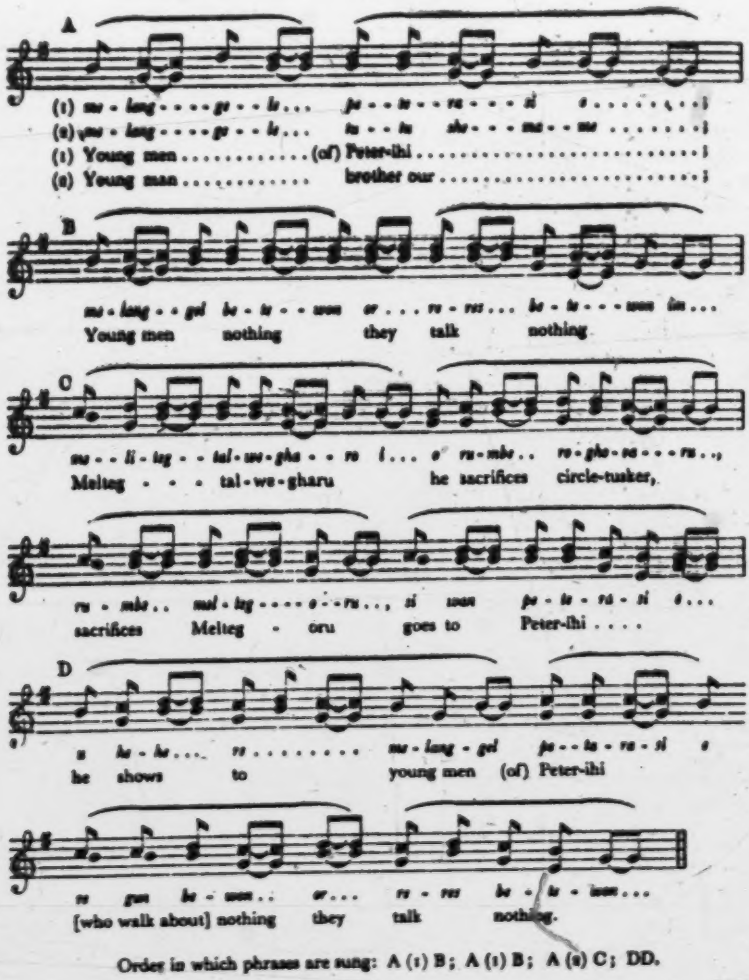
[2] The sow littering at Tolamp is symbolical of the fact that the wife was fertilised by a Tolamp man. This part of the tale seems to imply that if Burial was not himself fertile, his boars could not be either.

[3] Inferior trumpets are made also of Kassis shell. These are particularly noticeable in Oba (Speiser, 3, p. 422).

[4] See p. 243.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



SONG 6. LE-TEAN

A
(1) mu - lang - - - ge - - le . . . je - - te - - re - - - si e . . . . . ;
(2) mu - lang - - - ge - - le . . . te - - te she - - - ma - - me . . . . . ;
(1) Young men . . . . . (of) Peter-ihi . . . . . ;
(2) Young man . . . . . brother our . . . . . ;
B
mu - lang - - gel be - te - - wen er . . . re - res . . . be - te - - - wen im . . .
Young men nothing they talk nothing
C
me - - li - leg - - tal - we - gha - - ro i . . . e ru - mbe . . ro - gho - re - - - re . . ,
Melteg - - - tal - we - gharu he sacrifices circle-tusker,
ru - mbe . . mal - leg - - - - e - - ru . . , si wen je - te - re - si e . . .
sacrifices Melteg - oru goes to Peter-ihi . . . .
D
e he - he . . . . re . . . . . mu - lang - gel je - te - re - si e
he shows to young men (of) Peter-ihi
re gun be - wen . . er . . . re - res be - te - wen . . .
[who walk about] nothing they talk nothing.

Order in which phrases are sung: A (1) B; A (1) B; A (2) C; DD.

The words are in the usual archaic-poetic style: [1]

[1] Spoken Atchin equivalents:—*mulanggels = Malakel; bete-wen = na-wen; re-res = reki; shamanu = semam; rumbe = rewisi; rogho-re-ru = ruk-wa-ru.*

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
QO12 Malekula QO12



Translated freely, the words mean:

"The young men of Peter-ihi,
The young men have nothing,[1] they talk [2] in vain;
The young men of Peter-ihi,
The young men have nothing, they talk in vain;
Our young brother,[3] Melteg-tal-we-gharu,
He sacrifices a circle-tusker, he sacrifices (it).
Melteg-oru goes to Peter-ihi
And shows it to the young men of Peter-ihi
Who walk about, and talk in vain."

*Vows taken by certain Maki-men to abstain each from some desired object of food till he has made a new Maki for himself or for his son.*

When these personal songs are over, and each individual Maki-man has been thus lauded, the dancers all throw away their sticks and, clapping their hands, start singing the Oba Men's Song sung during the Exhibition of Pigs and again later before the announcing of the Maki-men's new names on the Fourth Day after the Maki. While they are doing this, one of the Maki-men who sacrificed at the dolmen issues from the crowd and dances round them, hissing fiercely and holding out his right hand as if grasping a spear. This is a sign that he wishes to make an important announcement. When the song is over, one of the dancers therefore calls out to him, "You speak. We want to hear what you have to say." The Maki-man then answers, "You ask me to speak. What shall I say?" Then, walking round them and gesticulating fiercely to show the fixity of his purpose, he makes a vow, swearing that he will abstain from some desired object till he has made another Maki, or made a new Maki for his son. He may swear that he will not eat a certain kind of yam, or banana, or some other article of food; but that he will "go home and pick out one of his pigs, and will feed it and feed it and feed it until it has grown into a circle-tusker, so that at last he will 'kill Maki' [4] with it, and then, and not till then, will he eat that yam." Some men who are unusually "strong," that is to say determined or pious, will even abstain from eating in the *ghamal* or leaving the island until they have again made Maki either for themselves or for their sons.

Having made his vow, the Maki-man resumes his place among the crowd of dancers, and the same song or another belonging to the same

[1] I.e. no pigs. [2] I.e. boast.

[3] The word *melanggele*, meaning "young man" or "youth," is a complimentary one, all Maki-men being theoretically held to be in the prime of young manhood. This is at the same time followed by the word *tu tu*, a term of respect used in ordinary parlance for "elder brother."

[4] This is a literal English translation of the native phrase, which in Atchin is *e pale maki*, meaning "to make the Maki sacrifice"; used intransitively the phrase was *Maki e pal*, "Maki is sacrificed."

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



that do the work. If, on the other hand, there is no Maki in progress, then both "lines" own it and do the work. 422

Though the cahoe belongs to the whole "line," or, if both "lines" combine, to the whole village, one man is spoken of as the "owner." It is he who performs the main sacrifices and directs operations, and it is with his personality that, after the consecration rite, the canoe itself becomes identified. This man, when the canoe is owned by one "line," is probably the leader of the Maki.

## BELIEFS AND RITUAL CONNECTED WITH THE MANUFACTURE AND CONSECRATION OF SEA-GOING CANOES

*First made by Ta-ghar-on Oba.*

Sea-going canoes are said to have been first made by Ta-ghar on Oba, whence the Small Islanders derived the art of making them. The following song refers to what is said to have been the first of such canoes. I did not record the tune. The words, as usual in songs, are archaic. The free rendering was given by a native. 113 539

*Wolo ro angk-e,*
*Om sin togo le leure.*
*Osongani nu-wak e walau;*
*Agos bane savega?*
*Go wolo-wolo angk.*
*Anggambasi wolo nggere-nggeres;* [1]
*Vavine geru rom turu.*
*Wolo ro angk,*
*Om sin togo le leure.*

"Run, run, canoe (before the wind),
Let it not hug the shore.
Keep it up towards the south;
At what place shall we land
The canoe is running.
He pretends to launch the canoe
Two women are waiting (at the landing-place)
Run, run, canoe,
Let it not hug the shore."

The sea-going nature of the canoe is here well emphasised, and reference to a southward course is interesting, though whether this is to the course from Oba or from still further north I cannot say. Some story lies behind the song, for which I have no key.

[1] Modern Atchin *ku-karas*, *karasi*, "to trick."

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



of the Vao natives, the two are often referred to together as Tolamp-Mal-vavang, and in Atchin before I had seen the reefs I was given to understand that the two names actually referred to two villages on the same island. It is interesting, therefore, to note that in the names Mal-vavang (according to the Vao pronunciation) and Mal-weaweng (as pronounced on Atchin) the syllables *vavang* and *weaweng* are philologically equivalent to the Oba phrase *wai vung*, there used, as seen on page 97, for "matrilineal moiety," found also in the Atchin phrase *n'ei weaweng* used for the ancestor-images representing all the deceased males belonging to the same matrilineal moiety within the erector's own lodge. It is just possible, therefore, that the two islands sometimes represented on Atchin as two "villages" on the same island may at one time have been occupied by localised matrilineal moieties at some period previous to the introduction of the present system of overt patrilineal descent.

*Tolamp closely related to Vao and Mal-weaweng to Atchin.*

As, after many intervening generations, the surviving descendants of the original inhabitants of Tolamp have eventually taken up their abode on Vao, and I have a note that those of Mal-weaweng finally took refuge on Atchin, it is probable that, as is at present the case in all the Small Islands, each Side of the now submerged community had affinities by marriage with the Small Island nearest it, namely Tolamp with Vao and Mal-weaweng with Atchin, as well as having the relations with villages on the mainland of Malekula which are definitely stated in the stories about to be related. As almost all the Malekulan villages near the coast have since been wiped out in the wars following the introduction of firearms by European traders, the survivors of each of the two submerged islands (or Sides of one Island) would have no choice but to gravitate to that island to whose inhabitants they were respectively most closely related.

## THE TALES

The tales told, bound up as they are with a much earlier creation myth, will be divided for convenience into two parts, dealing respectively with (*a*) the actual submergence; (*b*) the subsequent wanderings of the people.

### (*a*) The Flood

*Vao versions attribute the flood to the sea, Atchin version to the rain.*

Turning now to the tales told of the submergence, I have recorded three separate versions, and Godefroy has recorded a fourth. Of these, two are told on Vao, in both of which the island is referred to as Tolamp, and two on Atchin, each referring to Mal-weaweng. All four stories agree in essentials, but show interesting variations in the mythological

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



motives that have been attached to them. Thus, in the two versions recorded on Vao the submergence is said to have been caused by the encroachment of the sea, which in one case bursts out of a hole in the land, whereas in the two Atchin versions the agent was torrential rains. This is of interest, since tales of submergence by the sea bursting forth from a confined space on land are typical of the matrilineal island of Oba, with which Vao is culturally in so much closer contact than Atchin. If it is permitted here to bring in the findings of modern psychological research, I may be allowed to point out that of the two water elements, the sea and rain, the sea is almost universally regarded as female, while rain, coming from above, is male. It is thus not surprising to find that in the largely matrilineal island of Vao the agent responsible for the submergence is the sea, while in the more patrilineal island of Atchin it is the rain.

Following out this line of reasoning founded on male and female elements, it is interesting to note further that the version which attributes the flood to the sea bursting out of a hole in the land contains a number of other allusions to a system of matrilineal moieties, and makes no mention of any kind of quarrel based on considerations of kinship organisation. This is quite natural if we consider the mythological element in this version of the tale to be based on an undisturbed matrilineal dual organisation. In the remaining three versions, however, the flood itself is said to have been magically caused by an outraged father-in-law living on the mainland, whose daughter was married to a man living on the island, the inference being, though not overtly stated in the tales, that his action represented his protest against the newly introduced patrilineal organisation that gave the husband overmuch power over the wife.

In the first version there is, moreover, no mention of the Maki, which is an essentially patrilineal development of the public graded society, and which is specifically mentioned in all three remaining versions.

Yet another point of importance is the occurrence of the number 7 in one Atchin version only, this number, as we have already seen in connexion with the mortuary rites,[1] being the resurrection number among the patrilineal communities of Malekula as opposed to the matrilineal number 5.

With this brief introduction, I will now give the four versions, beginning with that recorded by Godefroy from Vao.

### VERSION 1 (TOLD ON VAO OF TOLAMP)[2]

This, the most mythical account of all, states that:

"One day, when they [the Tolamp folk] were all getting ready to go to the mainland, one man told his two small boys to stay at home on the island, telling them that they might play close to their house, but must

[1] See pp. 560, 640.

[2] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 49.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



on no account go to the other Side of the Island. After their parents had gone, the two brothers played about for a bit, and then went over to the other Side. After a while, feeling tired, they sat down and, in the course of their play, started hollowing out a hole in the sand. Their hands came up against two stones. They uncovered them; they were large; they lifted them up. Then suddenly, water began to spring forth, to rise, and finally to gush out of the hole. It was the sea that was swallowing up the island. The few men who had stayed at home on the island immediately signalled to those on the mainland and to those on the island of Vao. They rushed and broke off branches in the vain attempt to stop up the hole. But it was useless; the flow of water forced them back. They broke off branches from a magic tree so as to turn the water towards the shore. It was no use; the hole grew as they watched. Then there was a panic. All the men of Tolamp who had come back from the mainland gathered together their pigs, their bows, their tools for hollowing out canoes, their Ambrim stones which they used for cooking their puddings, everything they could, then sailed back over the strait and established themselves on the mainland. Some who had not hurried enough were swallowed up by the flood; others tried to swim and were eaten by sharks. The island foundered beneath six feet of water at low tide.

"Most of the population escaped, however, to that part of the coast facing the island, called Atchin Point."

## Comment

### (*a*) Evidence of social segmentation

This story is of great interest from two points of view. In the first place, it provides evidence of a division into a number of moieties, since the island is represented as being divided into two Sides, one of which is further sub-divided into two social groups clearly represented by the man's two sons, and the other into two other moieties represented by the two stones. The two boys did wrong in going to the other Side of the Island, and it was this act of disobedience that caused the flood.

### (*b*) The nature of the flood. Comparative evidence

The second point of interest is in the nature of the flood, represented as the sea issuing from a hole in the ground, recalling tales told on the matrilineal islands of Maewo and Oba. As a study in the local application of mythological motives these tales are worth quoting.

(i) *Maewo.* "*How Tagaro made the Sea.*"

The first, told on Maewo, is called "How Tagaro made the Sea,"[1] and runs: "They say that he made the sea, and that in old times the sea

[1] Codrington, 3, p. 370.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



was quite small, like a common pool upon the beach, and that this pool was at the back of his house, and that there were fish in the pool, and that he had built a stone wall round it. And Tagaro was gone out to look at the various things he had made, and his wife was in the village, and his two children were at home, whom he had forbidden to go to the back of the house.[1] So when he was gone the thought entered into the mind of those two, Why has our father forbidden us to go there? And they were shooting at lizards and rats; and after a while one said to the other, Let us go and see what that is he has bid us keep away from. So they went and saw the pool of salt-water with many fish crowding together in it. And one of the boys stood on the stones Tagaro had built up, and he sees the fish, and he shoots at one and hits it; and as he runs to catch hold of it he threw down a stone, and then the water ran out. And Tagaro heard the roaring of the water and ran to stop it; and the old woman laid herself down in the way of it, but nothing could be done; those two boys who had thrown down the stone took clubs like knives and prepared a passage for the sea, one on one side and the other on the other side of the place, and the sea followed as it flowed. And they think that the old woman turned into a stone, and lies now on the part of Maewo near Raga."

(ii) *Oba.* "*Story of the Old Woman, how she made the Sea.*"

The second, told on Oba, is called "Story of the old Woman, how she made the Sea," [2] and runs: "Nobody knows what her name was, but she was an old woman. And there were two children who lived with her in her house, but nobody knows what their father's and mother's names were; the story about them is that the mother of these two was the daughter of this old woman. Her house was a good one, fenced about with reeds; there was a fence all round the house, and there was a fence also made against the back of the house, and those two children were forbidden to go into it, because she would be there by herself. And in that little fence at the back of the house she put carefully a leaf of the *via* (gigantic caladium); and they say that in that leaf she always made water, and was always very strict in forbidding those two to go there, lest they should see it. And these two were both boys, and they were always shooting lizards. So one day when the old woman went into the garden to work and to bring back food for the three of them, she said to those two, Don't you go there! and they answered, Very well, we shall not go. And she went out of the house, and went into the gardens, and those two brothers played with their bows, shooting lizards. After a

[1] This probably refers to the fact that the two ends of each communal man's house belonged respectively to the opposing matrilineal moieties. In this way the "back of the house" in Maewo would correspond to the "other Side of the Island" in Tolamp.

[2] Codrington, 3, pp. 372-3.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



while one said to the other, It would be a good thing to go and see what it is where the old woman has forbidden us to go. Very well, said the other, let us go; so they went, and they saw that *via* leaf and the water in it. Then they saw a lizard sitting on a part of that leaf, and one of them shot at it, but missed the lizard and hit the leaf, and the water that was in it burst quickly forth. And the old woman heard it, and perceived that those two had probably shot the leaf. And she stood up and cried with a loud voice [here follow native words meaning] Pour round about and meet! Roundabout the world! And thus the sea for the first time stood full around the whole world, for before that they say there was no sea. So the old woman you may say made the sea herself."

This last phrase, and the fact that the water which subsequently became the sea came in the first place out of a woman, provides interesting confirmation of the suggestion put forward above that the sea is regarded as being female and that mythological references to floods caused by the sea as opposed to those caused by rain are connected primarily with matrilineal descent.

*Flood tales probably originated among a continental people.*

When we compare these stories, it becomes clear that, to the true story of the submergence of Tolamp has been added a flood myth long antedating the actual physical occurrence. Apart from any psychological or sociological considerations, two questions present themselves regarding them: What could possibly have given rise, among a seafaring people such as these, to the idea (*a*) that there was originally no sea, but only land?; (*b*) that the sea in the first place came out of a hole in the land? I venture to suggest that the reason may be partly historical, the idea having arisen among a continental people who, from observing water gushing out of springs and then gathering into rivers which finally poured themselves into the sea, drew the conclusion that the rivers gave rise to the sea which then spread itself in both directions as in the two stories from Maewo and Oba, and so finally "surrounded the world." However this may be, it is clear that the myth is not of local origin, but is derived from whatever source is responsible for the whole Tagaro-Qat complex already discussed in Chapter IX.[1]

*Remaining three versions attribute the flood to the weather magic of a mainlander whose daughter was married on the island.*

I will now return to the three other native versions of how the island of Tolamp–Mal-weaweng was submerged. Of these three, all of which

[1] Yet another myth dealing with the submergence of an island told in Vanua Lava is recorded by Codrington (3, p. 375). Here an anthropomorphic Eel warns a friendly family to escape, and himself causes the submergence by means of a great surf.

1:Layard ¹E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



I recorded myself, one was collected on Vao and the two others on Atchin. In the Vao version the flood is said to have been caused by the sea, and in the two Atchin versions by rain. In all three cases, however, the catastrophe is said to have been brought about by the weather magic of an inhabitant of the Malekulan mainland (the particular spot on the mainland differs in each version), whose daughter was married to a man on the doomed island, in revenge for the latter's insulting attitude towards him. In all three, also, the occasion when the quarrel occurred was an important rite connected with the Maki (though here also each version mentions a different part of the ritual cycle).

### VERSION 2 (TOLD ON VAO OF TOLAMP)

The men of Tolamp were making Maki, and had arrived at the rite there called *Navin*, which is equivalent to the dancing of *Settling-Down* before the Maki on Vao. Now the wife of one of the Tolamp men was a native of Lembu, a Malekulan village on the mainland path connecting the beaches opposite to Vao and Atchin. Wishing to bring her relatives from the mainland to witness the rite, she took her husband's canoe to fetch them. After the rite was over, and they had gone home again, her husband was angry with her for having taken his canoe without his permission, and swore at her. So she went over to the mainland, and told her father. He said to her, "Very well, bring your children over here to me. Don't tell anyone about it. Just come." And when she had brought her children safely over to the mainland, her father worked his weather magic and made a great sea. And the sea swamped the island, and the inhabitants were thrown into the water, and those who were not drowned swam ashore on to the mainland at Lembu.

The two Atchin versions are more circumstantial. Both refer to the island as Mal-weaweng.

### VERSION 3 (TOLD ON ATCHIN OF MAL-WEAWENG)

The people of Mal-weaweng had a traditional friendship with the inhabitants of Showul, a Malekulan village on the coast facing Mal-weaweng and Atchin, and on a certain occasion when the great Maki sacrifice was about to be performed they went over to fetch their relatives from Showul, since the people of that place, being mainlanders, have no canoes. The ultimate origin of the trouble that subsequently arose is not stated, but the immediate cause is that when one of the Showul women who was married to a man on Mal-weaweng proposed to her husband that she should take his canoe to fetch her father from Showul, he swore at her, saying, "Go and take a banana skin and bring him in that." This phrase probably referred to the belief already men-

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



tioned that ghosts travelling to Ambrim use banana skins as canoes,[1] the suggestion being that the husband wished his wife's father were dead. In any case it was a gross insult, with the result that she turned away in anger and, taking a canoe belonging to another man of the island, brought him home in that. And all the time she was paddling she cried, but would not tell him why. It was not till they arrived on the island that she told him what her husband had said about fetching him in a banana skin. Then he on his side was angry, and said, "Why did you not tell me that on the mainland? If you had, I should not have come. And now that we are already here, you tell me. It is too late to go back now; but I will not go to your house—let us go straight to the dancing-ground." So they went there, and when the pigs had been sacrificed for the Maki, the husband said to him, "Come to my house and eat some pudding." But the Showul man refused, and when the pigs were being distributed he said to his daughter, "If you hear a great rain in the night, take your yams and children and paddle them over to Showul. If you do not come when the rain starts you will be lost."

The father went back to Showul, leaving his daughter on Mal-weaweng. That night it began to thunder and the rain poured down in torrents. Then she remembered her father's words, and took a canoe and paddled with her children to Showul. And the rain increased and a hurricane arose and there was a great flood. And the waters covered the island and entered the Lodge, so that the men within it climbed up and clung to the ridge-pole (*wobat*), and if any man let go he was drowned. But a few swam ashore and reached dry-land at Lembu.

In the morning the father said to his daughter, "Go down to the beach and look out, and see whether your husband is still there." And she went to look, but there was no Mal-weaweng to be seen—nothing but sea and the tops of trees. And she came back and told her father.

### VERSION 4 (TOLD ON ATCHIN OF MAL-WEAWENG)

According to the second Atchin version, there were two brothers on Mal-weaweng, and the elder, who was married to a woman of the mainland village of Tutu, inland from Showul, was performing the ceremony of *Tab-tabuhen* (which is the Atchin name for the rite of consecrating the tusked boars destined for sacrifice at the Maki), and his father-in-law had promised to come to witness it. On the day in question the latter came down to the shore at Showul, where he was met by his daughter, who paddled him over in a canoe to Mal-weaweng. Now her husband had cut a bunch of bananas of the kind called *mat-mat* to be grated into a special pudding for the feast accompanying the rite. But the father was in a state of fast or mourning (*tour*)—my informant did not know on

[1] See p. 227.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



what account—during which yams are forbidden, so she gave him the bananas to eat.

After a time, her husband came and said, "What have you done with the bananas?" So she told him, and he said nothing, but was angry. When the rite was over, his wife went to him and said, "I am going to take my father back to the mainland." Then he swore, and threw some of the banana skins at her, and said crossly, "Very well, you go and take your father to the mainland." And she sat down and cried. And when she had finished crying she went and talked to her husband's younger brother, and said to him, "Let me take your canoe to paddle my father to the mainland." He said, "What's the matter with your husband's canoe?" She said, "He's angry, and doesn't want me to take my father home." "All right," he said, "my canoe is on the beach. Go and take it." So she took it, and paddled her father over. And when they got to Showul, she burst out crying again, and told him what her husband had done. So he said, "Very well, you wait seven days, and tell your husband's brother to come and see me then, and I will reward him [1] for the use of his canoe."

Then he went home, and built a new conical store-house, very strong, and gathered yams and cooking-leaves and bananas and all kinds of food and piled them inside it. Then he built another outside the first, and stored that full of food. Five such houses he built, one outside the other, and collected a great store of food against the rain that was to come.

And on the seventh day the woman said to her husband's brother, "Let us go and pay a visit to my father." He said, "Why?" And she said, "He told me to bring you to see him today so that he may reward you for the use of your canoe." So they went ashore and up the hill to Tutu.

That night her father, being a weather magician,[2] made the rain. And it rained, and rained, and the wind blew, and the outer one of his five store-houses was broken through. Then he told his daughter to go to Showul, to see what she could of Mal-weaweng. And when she came back, and they asked her what she had seen, she said, "Only one tree is still left standing in the dancing-ground." And the rain poured down and the wind blew, and next morning her father said to her, "Go down again to Showul, and look again to see what is left of Mal-weaweng." And she went and looked, and could see nothing. And she came back and told them.

## 7 is Re-birth number on Atchin

It is worth noting that, even in this comparatively circumstantial account, seven days elapse between the giving of the insult and the storm,

[1] The Atchin phrase for "I will reward him" is *pe lemak sen*.
[2] Atchin *pet wahit*. *Pet* means "stone." The magician is a "stone man."

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



and that five superimposed roofs are said to have been built over the magician's food-store. 7 is the typical resurrection and re-birth number on Atchin, as opposed to 5 on Vao. The use of these two numbers agrees with the view already expressed that the tale of the submergence of the island has become a hook on which to hang a much earlier flood-creation myth. Whether weather magic in fact takes seven days to mature I do not know. Much longer periods of incubation have been recorded. Deacon records that the length of time taken by a magician in South-West Malekula in preparation for a magical act "depends in part upon the potency with which he wishes to invest his magic, upon the intensity of his wrath or desire for vengeance. . . . In Lambumbu ten days appears to be the normal period" of intensive preparation.[1]

## The possible efficacy of weather magic

I will make no further comment on these stories other than to suggest that, under certain circumstances, the efficacy of weather magic may not be so illusory as is popularly thought. It has for the last few centuries in Europe been the fashion to minimise the power of the human psyche over the phenomena of external nature. Modern research, however, has gone a long way towards proving the reality of the phenomena connected with the exteriorisation of psychical energy, though there are not many among us who are now able to control them. It is, moreover, almost certain that primitive people with relatively undifferentiated egos are in touch with collective powers to a far greater extent than modern man, and that native magicians and others with special gifts in that direction develop and foster them by means of a definite technique. Weather magicians exist among primitive communities throughout the world, and it is well known that they undergo periods of fasting and psychic preparation of an intensive nature before attempting to practise their art. It is unlikely that so much energy should have been expended by so many natives of high standing in so many places and for such uncounted ages if no results whatever were forthcoming. I therefore suggest, not of course that all weather phenomena are capable of being brought under human control, but that in favourable circumstances the relatively close connexion between the primitive mind and natural forces may be such that some kind of contact may indeed be established on the lower levels of consciousness by means of which a certain measure of control may become operative. Thus, while in the accounts just given the real cause of the submergence was clearly some kind of seismic disturbance of a kind not uncommon on the volcanic belt in which the New Hebrides lie, it is interesting to note that the narrators, all of whom attribute it to human agency, are unanimous in staging the kind of psychic tension that they would consider necessary

[1] Deacon, 4, p. 685.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



to stimulate the magician's powers to their maximum extent, namely the great emotional effect connected with all Maki rites coupled with an acute kinship problem and sense of personal injury.[1]

## (b) The Subsequent Wanderings of the Survivors of Tolamp on the Mainland of Malekula

We have seen how, in the tales regarding the submergence of Tolamp and Mal-weaweng, the facts have in large measure been dressed up and made to fit in with a mythological pattern of much more ancient date. I have no further record of what happened to the inhabitants of Mal-weaweng, except that the descendants of some of the survivors eventually took refuge on Atchin. I have, however, two records of the subsequent wanderings of the survivors of Tolamp on the mainland of Malekula till the last remnants of their descendants finally settled on Vao. These tales show a similar admixture of facts with mythological and ritual data.

[1] The reader interested in this important subject should study Chapter XXIII on Magic in Deacon's *Malekula*. This work, dealing with South-West Malekula, cannot be taken as applying in detail to the Small Islands, but the principles underlying the practice of magic are probably the same. He says (p. 688): "The performance of any magical act is composed really of three parts: firstly, the elaborate and often very lengthy preparation for the act, by a rigorous asceticism [including abstinence of all kinds], by means of which the performer at once safeguards himself [against the forces he raises turning themselves against himself] and gains power; secondly, the magical rite itself, 'the experimental arrangement and manipulation by which the intensity accumulated by the preparation is made to become effective towards a definite object'; and thirdly, the words uttered, or other means employed (as, for instance, making a feint with spear or blow-gun), both to 'shoot off' the magic and direct it, and to act as a flood-gate for the pent-up strain of the performer." Further, "It seems to me that much more attention needs to be paid to the antecedents of the magical act; that to a considerable extent the sympathetic-contagious principle which Frazer brought out is employed in preparing the channel or mechanism through which the magic is to act (similar, for instance, to a system of pulleys in mechanics), but that the power or force is something distinct, owing its genesis to the whole 'psychological series' leading up to the moment at which the sympathetic-contagious mechanism is released. So far as I can see, the acceptance of the sympathetic-contagious principle is absolutely implicit; it is what 'logic' or 'common sense' is with us, a thing unthinkable to deny, inevitable, universal. It is as impossible for the native to think a proposition based on this principle untrue as it is for us to think an obvious logical proposition untrue. . . . Again and again a discussion has ended by my realising that the magical principle was to my partner in the discussion so implicitly accepted as to make any consciousness of it or generalisation about it unthinkable. With the greatest intelligence he would prepare to doubt or discuss any one particular method, its efficacy, etc., but as for a suspicion that there was some fundamental mental process entering into all his magic—no, never! This leads up to the point that the native sorcerer or magician is absorbed, not in the mechanism of the magic, but in the 'psychological series' preceding the 'magical act.' It seems clear that he is conscious of some entity, capable of generalisation, though he may be unable to generalise it, which enters as an essential into every magical act; you can call it 'magical force,' 'power,' 'necessary psychological state,' or what you will. It seems to me to be the sort of entity that, for instance, sin is in the Christian 'heretical' sects." (Deacon, 4, pp. 688-9.)

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



### VERSION 1 (TOLD ON VAO)

I will give first a more recent matter-of-fact and very over-simplified version recorded by Godefroy on Vao. He considers that the actual submergence took place "at least 150 years ago." [1] After describing the landing of the original survivors on what he calls Atchin Point, he says: "There they constructed a new dancing-ground, and built a new village round it. Later, however, they complained that the new village was too close to the path along which men pass from one island to another, so they decamped again, establishing themselves this time in the interior, towards the mountains. There they established relations with other tribes, but had no dancing-ground of their own. That was the irremediable end of Tolamp as an independent people. Finally, about 100 years ago, reduced to no more than five or six families, they asked hospitality of the people of Vao. Here they were received by the people of Toghvanu and Pete-hul. Today there are no more than two families left; a third died out five years ago." [2]

The two versions recorded by me, while giving the story in somewhat greater detail, are both dressed in a ritual pattern that can hardly be in accordance with actual fact, depending as they both do on the use of the mystic number 7, recalling the seven days it took for the magician to brew the storm in Version 4 dealing with the actual submergence of the island. This use of the number 7 clearly indicates that the conception lying behind all these tales is one of ritual re-birth, a resurrection following on the catastrophe of the flood. I will give first the version recorded on Vao.

### VERSION 2 (TOLD ON VAO)

Now the survivors who landed at Lembu were a people without a home. First they made a dancing-ground in one place, then in another. They made one at a place now called Le-sar [3] Moloto, and made Maki there. Then they moved to a place called Na-talal, and made Maki there. Then to Le-sar Asum, then to La-mbar-humbun, and then to Tambi. At each of these places they made Maki, and then moved elsewhere. All these places were close to the sea and in sight of the submerged island. At the Maki at Tambi were still present some of those who were born on Tolamp. At last the men of the mainland village

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 213. According to my own calculations it must have taken place even earlier, since the giant monolith set up by the survivors' descendants (see p. 586) was erected not less than 150 years ago.

[2] Ibid., 1, 1933, p. 49.

[3] Le-sar is the locative form of the Vao *se-sar*, meaning "dancing-ground," and so also "village."

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



of Le-mel [1] Pughe persuaded them, and said, "It is no use your always staying close to the sea. You keep on thinking of your island and hoping that one day you will be able to go back to it, and you can't settle down and stay in one place. It were better you come up here and stay with us." So they left Tambi and went up to Le-mel Pughe and founded a permanent village there, and called it after their lost island, Tolamp.[2]

Now all their pigs had been drowned, so when they wanted to make Maki they had at first to sacrifice 100 ants, then 100 shell-beads (*na-sum*), then 100 dogs, then 100 crabs (*na-ghav*), then 100 shell-fish of a kind called *na-ghar*, then 100 *ninge* nuts, and hundreds of many other things, till at last they made a proper Maki with a hundred pigs.

The substitution of other forms of sacrifice such as those mentioned above instead of pigs is a type of myth common throughout the Small Islands and North Malekula when dealing with the origin of the Maki. While details of the kinds of animal or fruit sacrificed vary somewhat, the number of kinds, including the final sacrifice of pigs, is invariably seven, as is the case in the above account. It will be noted also that, including Lembu, the place where they first swam ashore, the survivors changed their abode seven times before finally settling down in their new home and called it after the name of their lost island, Tolamp. In the Atchin version, though the names of the places are not all the same, the fact that seven was the number of changes made is definitely stated as a significant fact. This version runs as follows:

### VERSION 3 (TOLD ON ATCHIN)

When Mal-weaweng was submerged, the men of Tonlap (Tolamp) swam across to a place on the mainland coast called Viawor, and made a village there and a dancing-ground. But all their pigs had been drowned, so they had none to sacrifice. So they said, "It is useless for us to stop here. We must go elsewhere." So they went to Le-tsar [3] Na-ghar and made a dancing-ground. But still they had no pigs, so they moved again to Le-tsar Mòlōti, then to Le-tsar Na-shum, then to Bot N'amil. Each time they made a new dancing-ground, but still had no pigs. At last they came to Tabwish, where the men of Vao come ashore to go to their gardens. Here they stopped, till the men of Mel Tar said, "It is useless for you to stop here. Come with us, and we will go a little way

[1] *Mel* is one of the many forms connected with the Vao word *ghamal*, used with the meaning of "dancing-ground," and *so* also "village."

[2] This is said to have occurred a long time before the birth of Pelur (see genealogy, p. 93).

[3] *Le-tsar* is the Atchin and mainland form of the Vao *le-sar*, the locative form of the word used for the dancing-ground round which each village centres.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



into the bush, and found a village there." So they went with the men of Mel Tar, and settled down and called the place Tonlap.

It will be noticed that the names of two of the substitute objects said to have been sacrificed in the Vao version appear in the names of the places at which dancing-grounds were made, which suggests some connexion between the two. Being unable to state what the precise connexion may be, I will content myself with tabulating the facts, hoping that subsequent research may provide a solution:

| Places stopped at | | Substitute Objects sacrificed in Vao Version |
|---|---|---|
| *Vao Version* | *Atchin Version* | |
| Lembu | Viawor | Ants |
| Le-sar Moloto | Le-tsar Na-ghar | Shell-beads (*na-sŭm*) |
| Na-talal | Le-tsar Moloti | Dogs |
| Le-sar Asum | Le-tsar Na-shum | Crabs (*na-ghav*) |
| La-mbar-humbun | Bot N'amil | Shell-fish (*na-ghar*) |
| Tambi | Tabwish | Canary nuts (*ninge*) |
| Le-mel Pughe (Tolamp) | Mel Tar (Tonlap) | Pigs |

## (*c*) Subsequent Events in the Mainland Village of Tolamp

### Laha-mbar-mbar and the Erection of the Giant Monolith

At first the uprooted survivors had died at a terrible rate from sickness and despair, until at last, apart from the younger generation, there were, according to tradition, only four old men left. These were Melteg-mal, Rambrambe, Lilten and Vel-tamat, who doubtless represent four divisions of society in the same way as the four brothers alleged to have founded the four Quarters of Pete-hul.

In their new home they prospered and made Maki many times, and became once more so powerful as to attempt, and very nearly to carry out, the greatest physical and ritual feat ever heard of in Malekula, namely, the erection of the largest monolith ever set up within the limits of the Maki culture-complex.

As the two versions of this story obtained on Vao and on Atchin agree in all essential points, I propose here to combine them into one. The only discrepancy of any note is that in the Vao version this event is placed some time after the survivors had been settled in the new Tolamp, while the Atchin version asserts that it took place during the first Maki performed there and makes the enterprise due to the miraculous acquisition of a sow, which finally released the wanderers from the necessity of sacrificing only the substitute objects mentioned above.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



*Laha-mbar-mbar, "Missing Testicle," the son of a woman who conceived by means of a snake before intercourse with her husband Tiki-tikis.*

The hero of the story is a man called, in Vao, Laha-mbar-mbar, and in Atchin Las-par-par, from *laha* (*las*), meaning "testicle," and *mbar* (*par*), "to be missing," because, according to the Vao version, he has no testicles, and according to the Atchin version only one.[1] I give the story of his birth in its Atchin version, which in this case is the most complete, but in transcribing it I will, for the sake of uniformity, retain the Vao form of the name Laha-mbar-mbar.

Laha-mbar-mbar's father was a Tolamp man named Tiki-tikis, who married the younger of two sisters from the mainland village of Pot-nangal, the elder being married to a man of the neighbouring village of Pweter-ul. Tiki-tikis's marriage was of a type not uncommon in Malekula, the girl being not yet of age for sexual intercourse when her husband led her home to Tabwish, the sixth and last village before the foundation of the final settlement once again called Tolamp. On the way, he walked quickly in front, while she followed more slowly behind, which caused him to stop from time to time in order to let her catch him up, when he would immediately again go on ahead. Not far from her own home a large snake came into the path. Tiki-tikis, as usual, was on ahead, so did not see the snake. But when the girl came to the spot, it caught and bit her.[2] Tiki-tikis heard her cry, and ran back, saying, "What's the matter?" She said, "That snake bit me," and as he ran he saw the snake, but said, "We cannot kill it." And he took a leaf and rubbed the wound, and said, "Throw the leaf with the blood on it back to the snake." And she did so. And he took the girl and gave her to his mother to look after till she should be of age. And the wound healed.

And she was still young, and Tiki-tikis had not yet lain with her, but she conceived and became with child without intercourse. And his mother saw that she was big, and said, "If she is with child, whose is it?" Tiki-tikis thought hard, and said, "But she is too young. If the girl were old enough, I could understand. I cannot think how she has

[1] These are the local explanations. It is worth noting, however, that in Sa'a and Ulawa, in the Solomon Islands, *alaha* (of which *a* is the personal article) means "chief" (see Ivens, 1, p. 57).

[2] Snakes are phallic symbols throughout Melanesia (see Speiser, 4). Small Island and Northern New Hebridean mythology in general is full of tales of men and women both turning into snakes (see, for example, Codrington, 3, Tales 11 and 12, pp. 403, 404; Tattevin, 2, 1929, pp. 991-3). It is said that of the inhabitants of the mainland village of Botore, close to Lcuru opposite Vao, all men (but not women) when they die turn into snakes of a kind called *tambere*. A mother's brother's daughter of my informant Ma-taru was married to a Botore man who died. She subsequently returned to her home at Togh-vanu on Vao, but no man will marry her because they are afraid that if any man did so her former husband would come in the form of a *tambere* snake and eat him. I have a note of a snake called *Le-centuru* who gave birth to a girl and created a species of yam called *bihure*.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



become like that." And she bore a son, and one of his testicles was missing, for the snake had eaten it. So they called him Laha-mbar-mbar, "Missing Testicle." She had also a second child, whose name is forgotten.

*She finds a sow at the spot where she conceived. The sow gives birth to five circle-tuskers.*

After a time, she went to pay a visit to her mother's brother at Potnangal, carrying Laha-mbar-mbar on her back. Tiki-tikis went on in front, as before. When they came to the place where the snake had bitten her, she saw before her in the road a young sow. She caught hold of the sow, which squealed, and Tiki-tikis, hearing the noise, looked back and asked, "What's that?" She said, "This sow is for my son." He replied, "All right, you take it," and she took the sow back with her to Tolamp, and fed it, so that it grew. And it was not long before the sow had a litter of five male pigs, each one of which grew to be a circle-tusker.

*They make a seventh dancing-ground and call the place Tolamp.*

Having at last the necessary pigs to sacrifice for a Maki, they said, "Now we will make a new dancing-ground. We have moved six times already, and found no pigs. Now that we have found a pig we will move a seventh time." So they founded the seventh village since their sojourn on the mainland and called it Tolamp. And when they had cleared the ground, they went in search of a monolith worthy of the occasion.

*They attempt to fell a giant monolith 30 feet high, but fail.*

This monolith was a coral block about 30 feet high and about 3 feet thick, which stood, or, as the natives say, "grew," in a ravine called La-mat-mat. When it had been decided to remove this to the village, the men of Vao and of all the surrounding mainland villages were invited, according to custom, to come in turn (*ar tame vanu*) to strike the base of the block with stone adzes in order to detach it from the body of the rock. The usual pigs and yams were distributed among the workers, but however hard they worked they could not succeed in felling it, and the enterprise was abandoned.

*The monolith accidentally felled—and broken—by Laha-mbar-mbar's mother while searching for crabs.*

Now one day the mother of Laha-mbar-mbar was on her way down to the shore, because it was low tide (*wuwo*) and she wanted to catch crabs. The particular kind of crab she sought was that called *na-ghav*[1] which lives in holes in the reef, and when one is seen entering its hole the searcher breaks open the mouth of the hole with a special hard stone

[1] It will be remembered that this was one of the substitute animals sacrificed by the survivors before they had acquired any pigs.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



called for this purpose *wet-wowu* and thus secures the crab. Such a stone the mother of Laha-mbar-mbar was carrying in her basket as she passed by La-mat-mat, musing on the fearful expense in pigs and yams incurred by her son in inviting all the villages to assist him in the apparently endless job of felling the giant monolith. Suddenly she saw a crab scuttling into a hole in the base of the monolith itself. Without thinking, she took the hard stone out of her basket and started breaking away the mouth of the hole, to get at the crab. As she struck, suddenly the monolith toppled, and fell over into the ravine, breaking into three pieces.

*Luha-mbar-mbar sacrifices at the felled monolith, and his mother eats the sacrificial pig.*

When she saw what she had done, she ran back to the village and told her son, "I have felled the stone." He would not believe her, and said, "How could you do what the men of all the villages have been trying to do in vain?" She said, "Come and look." So he went,[1] and saw that it was true, and returning, sounded the gongs and told the people. And they went down to the place, taking 100 yams and a gelded re-entrant-tusker. And Laha-mbar-mbar sacrificed the tusker and made a new fire. And the pig was roasted on the fire and given to his mother to eat.[2] And she ate it all herself, and what she could not eat at one meal, she carried home to finish later.

*Monolith dragged to the village in three parts. Laha-mbar-mbar's mother causes the largest to stand erect by means of magic wand.*

And they made sledges and dragged the three pieces of the monolith up to the dancing-ground. Even then, however, their troubles were not over, for, according to the Atchin version, when the time came to erect them, the combined manhood of the countryside failed to set the largest on end. So Laha-mbar-mbar, in despair, went to his mother's house, and said, "Mother, we can't erect it." "Why not?" she asked, and he said, "Because it is too heavy." "Very well," she said, "go back to the dancing-ground and I will soon be there." And when she came, she took a wand and touched the stone with it "as if she were praying to it." And she spoke to the stone, and said, "Why will you not be lifted up? Do you wish to sleep? It were better if you stood." Then she said to those who had failed to raise it, "Now take hold of the ropes and pull." And they pulled again, and the stone stood up. This was the lower of the three sections, and the largest. It was set up in the place of honour on the Upper Side of the dancing-ground. The top section was also set up on the Upper Side, and the middle section on the Lower.

[1] According to the Atchin version, this took place on the following morning.

[2] Pigs may no longer be eaten by women in the Small Islands, but were formerly, and still are in some mainland villages. It will be noted that the animal was a gelded tusker and not a boar.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



*They build a stone-platform and 10 Maki-shrines and sacrifice a triple-circle-tusker.*

They built also a stone-platform, the men of the assembled villages making one continuous line down to the shore as they handed the stones from one to the other.[1] They built, too, on the Upper Side of the dancing-ground, 10 Maki-shrines such as are erected for the Maki on Atchin. The chief circle-tusker they sacrificed is one of the most famous on record, its tusks each completing three circles.[2] This triple-circle-tusker was called Peter-mul. In addition to this were sacrificed yet another circle-tusker and a re-entrant-tusker, as well as numerous smaller pigs at each of the ten Maki-shrines, and 100 gelded re-entrant-tuskers at the women's stones at the Lower Side of the dancing-ground.

*Giant monolith called Pal-palen Peter-mul. Measurements.*

The giant monolith was called Pal-palen Peter-mul, after the triple-circle-tusker; *pal-palen*, as we have seen, being the word used for sacrificial stone.[3] Apart from the much greater size of this monolith in its original unbroken state, the bottom part, which is still standing, is by far the largest monolith known ever to have been set up on Malekula. All three parts are yet to be seen where once the mainland community of Tolamp flourished and performed its rites, but where now once again the thick forest has regained its sway. Of the three portions, the base, seen in Plate XXII (with my informant Ma-taru, himself a Tolamp man and narrator of this account, standing by), still stands erect to a height of 12 feet above the ground. The top, seen in Plate XXIII, stands obliquely with 8 feet 6 inches showing above the ground. The middle, now lying prostrate and covered with bush, has a length of 5 feet 6 inches. There are thus 26 feet of this monolith now visible, so that, reckoning that the two upright portions have each at least 4 more feet of themselves buried beneath the ground, the original unbroken monolith cannot have been less than 30 feet high.[4] In section it is oval, with the broad side of the top and bottom portions facing what used to be the dancing-ground. The breadth at the base of the bottom portion is a little over 3 feet 6 inches, and near the top of the upper portion about 2 feet 6 inches.

[1] A process called *na-gogo-hon-vat*. *Hon* means "sacred" and *vat* means "stone." I do not know the meaning of *na-gogo*.

[2] Equal in size to the tusker existing at the time of my visit in the village of Emil Marur on Atchin, admitted by the people of Vao to be the finest tusked boar then living.

[3] See p. 417, where Godefroy's spelling is *pal-palon*.

[4] Speiser (1, p. 60) refers to this broken monolith as having once been 5 metres high. But he gives no further details, and may not have been aware of the existence of the third portion. He assumes that, being made of coral, it must have been dragged up from the shore.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



173
539

*Laha-mbar-mbar's mother causes tree-fern images from Oba to be washed ashore at Tabwish.*

There is yet another story told on Atchin of Laha-mbar-mbar and his mother's magic gifts. On an expedition to Oba he had seen images of the kind called *ulu* (Atchin *wulu*), made of tree-fern, at that time unknown in Malekula, and had said to himself, "If I had images like that at home, I would sacrifice pigs for them." And when he returned, he spoke to his mother, saying, "If only I had those ten Oba *ulu* here, I would make sacrifices for them." And his mother said, "Very well, go down to the shore at Tabwish, and you will find them there. The sea has brought them." In the morning he went down to the shore, and saw them, even as his mother had said. And she asked him, "Did you see them?" And he said, "Yes," and she told him to gather all the men together and drag them up to the dancing-ground. And when they were all set up, he took ten circle-tuskers, and made Maki with them.

*His mother's elder sister's son is jealous. He gives Laha-mbar-mbar access to his wife, and is rewarded with a litter of pigs.*

Now his mother's elder sister, who was married at Pweter-ul, also had a son,[1] but could find no pigs there for him to sacrifice. And this boy said to his mother, "My (classificatory) brother (Laha-mbar-mbar) is junior to me. Why should he have circle-tuskers and I have none?" She said, "If you wish, we will try and find one," and he said, "I do wish."

So he went and spoke to the mother of Laha-mbar-mbar, and said, "He is the junior. Why can't I too find a circle-tusker?" So she said cryptically, "If you want to find a circle-tusker, you will; if you don't, you won't." He said, "But I do." "Very well, bring your wife tomorrow to Le-tsar Nagun."

Next morning he and his wife got up and took a crescent-tusker and waited with it at Le-tsar Nagun. After a time, Laha-mbar-mbar appeared, and the husband turned aside into the bush and his wife gave the crescent-tusker to Laha-mbar-mbar, and he lay with her. And when he had done, the husband returned and said to him, "How can I find a circle-tusker?" Laha-mbar-mbar replied, "You go and feed your pigs well, and if one of your sows gets a litter of five pigs, keep them all."

And he did so. And two of his sows littered with five pigs each, and he kept them and fed them well, and all ten grew to be circle-tuskers. And he made sacrifice of them at a Maki at Pweter-ul.

[1] This special mention of the mother's elder sister's son instead of the more usual relationship traced through the father, provides further presumptive evidence of a former condition of overt matrilineal descent.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



173 *Laha-mbar-mbar's mother marries Ulter, of Togh-vanu.*

539 Laha-mbar-mbar's mother subsequently came to Togh-vanu, on Vao, and was married to Ulter, founder of the Quarter called *La-mbang-ne-metins*, and bore him a son named Bombo-ronge.

*Dating. Giant Monolith probably erected about 150 years ago.*

174 This gives us a convenient dating-point, not only for the erection of the Tolamp monolith, but for the founding of the Togh-vanu Quarter just mentioned. For Pelur, my informant, now an old man of 70 or 80, calls both Laha-mbar-mbar and Bombo-ronge *tete*, "father." In spite of this classificatory relationship, however, Bombo-ronge was a white-haired old man (*mer-sean*) while Pelur was still a child, though he just remembers seeing him before he died. Laha-mbar-mbar, though actually Bombo-ronge's half-brother, will be seen from the story to have been at least a generation older, and Pelur never saw him. Owing to the fact that the natives have no knowledge of their own age, it is impossible to establish dates with any degree of accuracy. An approximation, however, can be made by adding the time that has elapsed since Bombo-ronge's death (say 70 years) to his own age (again say 70), which places the erection of the Tolamp monolith at rather more than 140, that is to say roughly 150 years ago, i.e. A.D. 1765.

The founding of the *La-mbang-ne-metins* Quarter by Ulter would thus appear to have taken place about the same time; which agrees within five years with Godefroy's suggested dating seen in Table III. If this calculation is correct, the actual submergence of Tolamp must have taken place much earlier, say at least 200 years ago or round about 1735.

I should be glad of any information regarding similar submergences in this area round about this date.

173 DESTRUCTION OF THE MAINLAND VILLAGE OF TOLAMP IN SUBSEQUENT WARS. THE SURVIVORS TAKE REFUGE ON VAO

Laha-mbar-mbar had a son named Te-lugh-lugh, whose son, named Ter-ter-mal, was the father of my middle-aged informant Ma-taru. At the time of the final break-up of the mainland village of Tolamp during the disastrous wars following the introduction of muskets when the Small Islanders who were the first to acquire these fatal weapons laid waste the adjacent Malekulan communities, Ter-ter-mal was a boy. Some of the fighting that took place during this mournful period which the Small Islanders now bitterly regret is described in the chapter on Warfare, pp. 602 ff. It was as a result of these wars that the decimated survivors

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012



789 particular kind of rain it is desired to produce. While singing, he taps with his hands upon the 4 young coconuts through their umbrella-leaf wrapping, to symbolise the pattering of the rain upon the ground. This he repeats over and over again till chased away by the rising tide. Then he retires, leaving the image there surrounded by its pudding and the 4 coconuts, having first covered them with heavy stones in order to prevent them from being washed away.

If no rain comes, the process is repeated on the following day, and if necessary again on the next. If on the fourth day there is still no rain, while singing his song he will spear the pudding as if to break the clouds. The same will be done on the fifth day, and if the rain still cannot be induced to fall it is evident that he has failed, and that there is some magician stronger than himself who is engaged in making the sun to shine.

If he still desires to make rain he must start all over again, and this time will choose a creek on the mainland, in the hopes that fresh water will be more efficacious than salt.[1]

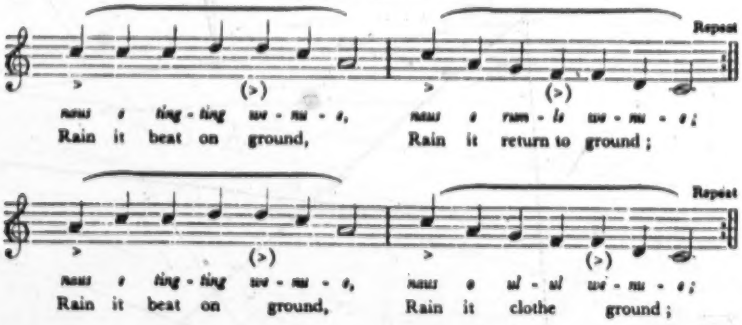
*The Songs.*

789 I recorded three songs, each for a different kind of rain, all of which
533 are remarkable for their comparative simplicity both in melody and in rhythm, in which they contrast vividly with most Small Island songs.

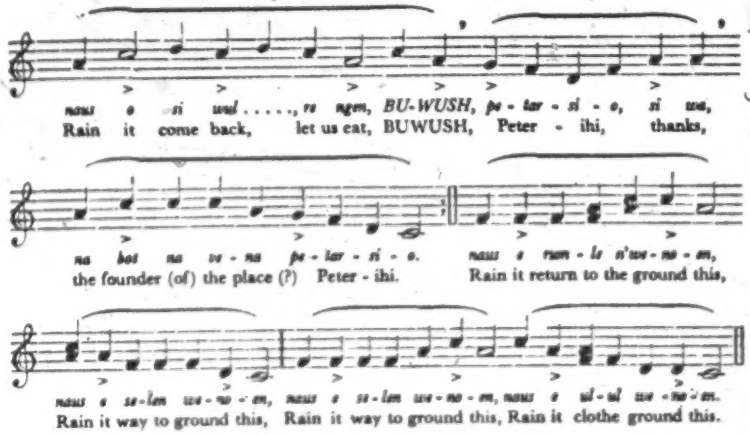
539 The first song, No. 9, is for obtaining what is called the rain of Vao, that is to say a general rain on a calm day without wind from any particular direction. Note the staccato form of the personal appeal to the founder, Bu-wush.

SONG 9

*For "the rain of Vao" (i.e. rain without wind)*


Repeat
naus e ting-ting uv-ni-e, naus e rum-li uv-ni-e;
Rain it beat on ground, Rain it return to ground;
Repeat
naus e ting-ting uv-ni-e, naus e ul-ul uv-ni-e;
Rain it beat on ground, Rain it clothe ground;

[1] Compare the report by Deacon (4, p. 670) that "a certain magician could bring about wet weather by pouring water on to a certain stone." Harrisson, in a written communication, mentions the spitting of kava juice towards each point of the compass. The use of kava in weather magic on Atchin will be described in a future volume.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

naus o si wul . . . . ., re ngen, BU-WUSH, pe - tar - si - o, si wa,
Rain it come back, let us eat, BUWUSH, Peter - ihi, thanks,
na bot na ve - na pe - tar - si - o.
the founder (of) the place (?) Peter - ihi.
naus e rum - le n'we - ne - en,
Rain it return to the ground this,
naus e se - len we - ne - en, naus e se - len we - ne - en, naus e ul - ul we - ne - en.
Rain it way to ground this, Rain it way to ground this, Rain it clothe ground this.

789
533
539

The words divide themselves into three verses:

*Naus e ting-ting wenu(e),*
*Naus e rumle wenu(e);*
*Naus e ting-ting wenu(e),*
*Naus o ul-ul wenu(e).*

*Naus o si wul re ngen.*
*Buwush, Petar-si-o, siwa,*
*Na bot na ve na Petarsio.*

*Naus e rumle n'weno-en,*
*Naus e selen weno-en,*
*Naus e selen weno-en,*
*Naus e ul-ul weno-en.*

"Let rain beat on the ground,
Let rain return to the ground,
Let rain beat on the ground,
Let rain clothe the ground.

"Let rain come back, that we may eat.
Buwush, of Peter-ihi, thanks,
Founder of Peter-ihi.

"Let rain return to this ground,
Let rain make its way to this ground,
Let rain make its way to this ground,
Let rain clothe this ground."

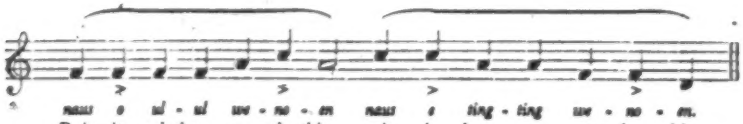
The first and third verses represent the practitioner's desire, and the second his appeal and professed gratitude to his predecessors in the rite.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12



789
533
539

The whole song is in the usual archaic poetic diction. Bu-wush, whose name appears in the second stanza, is, as we have seen, reputed to have been the first man to have made wind and rain magic on Vao. The song is repeated a number of times, and at each repetition the name of Bu-wush is changed for that of each weather magician in turn through whom the stone image and the knowledge of the rite have descended to the present practitioner. Some of these names, on the occasion on which I heard the song, were repeated more than once. They were in groups of 4, namely Meten, Memes, Itöm, Meten; and Iwa, Meten, Nigha, Itöm. At the end of each group of 4 names two lines were repeated, ending on a characteristically weak note, thus:




"Let rain clothe this ground,
Let rain beat on this ground."

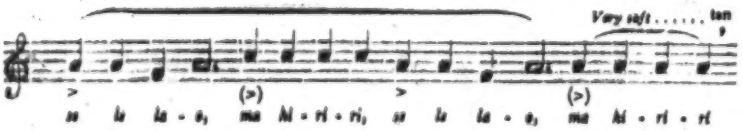
It will be noted how the name of the practitioner's village, Peter-ihi, is rendered by the archaic *Petar-ri-o*.[1] *Ting-ting* is a word commonly used for the beating of gongs, and *ul* of articles of clothing, i.e. men's penis-wrappers and women's mat-skirts.[2] Of special interest is the word *siwa*, here rendered "thanks," a word of unknown origin, noted elsewhere throughout these volumes, indicating heartfelt gratitude.

The other two rain songs which I recorded are:

Song 10, for rain coming from the direction of the island of Oba, i.e. from the north-east. I am unable to translate this. Though the melody is very simple, constructed as it is with only three notes, there is peculiar charm in the very softly sung passages occurring on the words *ma hi ri ri*.

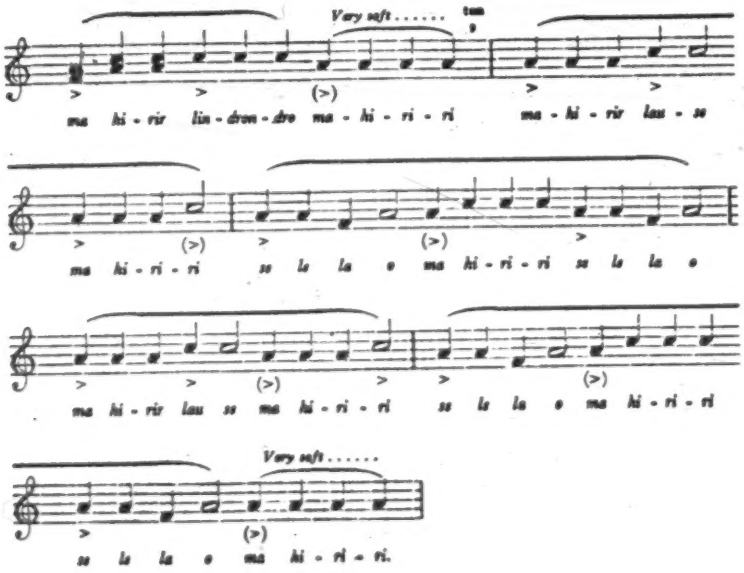
SONG 10

*To obtain rain from the direction of the island of Oba (i.e. from the North-east)*




[1] Compare *Peter-ari* in Song 6, p. 404.

[2] The danger of translating such archaic words without accurate knowledge of the poetic dialect is well illustrated by the fact that the words *re ngen*, in the first line of the second stanza, mean, in the language of today, "in it," but in the poetic dialect represent the modern *re ghan*, "let us eat."

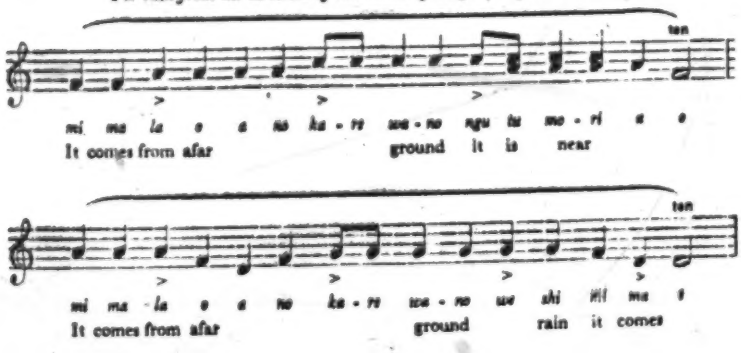
1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Very soft.....
ma hi - rir lin - dron - dro ma - hi - ri - ri ma - hi - rir lau - se
ma hi - ri - ri se la la o ma hi - ri - ri se la la o
ma hi - rir lau se ma hi - ri - ri se la la o ma hi - ri - ri
Very soft.....
se la la o ma hi - ri - ri.

789
J33
J39

Song 11, for rain coming from the direction of the island of Raga. Of the archaic words of this song I am able to suggest the translation of some only, which appear to indicate a coaxing attitude, suggesting that the rain, though it has far to travel, cannot be long in coming. It is repeated over and over again.

SONG 11

*For rain from the direction of the island of Raga (i.e. from the East)*


ten
mi ma la o a na ka - re wa - no ngu ta no - ri a o
It comes from afar ground It is near
ten
mi ma la o a na ka - re wa - no we shi ihi ma i
It comes from afar ground rain it comes